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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/603,400

06/24/2003

Chris N. Strahm

110.0001

4853

35987

7590

03/23/2005

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EXAMINER

LEJA, RONALD W

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2836

DATE MAILED: 03/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

H.A

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/603,400

Applicant(s)

STRAHM, CHRIS N.

Examiner

Ronald W. Leja

Art Unit

2836

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 June 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/22/2003.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 2836

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lei (5,729,418).

Lei discloses a current limiter, Fig. 3, for use with measurement equipment (for Claims 5, 13 and 17) (see Col. 4, lines 41-45); having a signal path (22) comprising at least one depletion-mode MOSFET (M1), (M2) and a variable impedance device, P-channel JFET (J1) (for Claims 6-10) and a control path (R1, D1, D2, R2) for controlling the signal path. Lei discloses that when a voltage above a selected value is reached between the terminals, the signal path switches to a high impedance, with only a constant a bias current flowing thru the control path and each end terminal (A), (B) (for Claims 2 & 6), but does not appear to specifically disclose a first lower voltage threshold for which the signal path becomes a low impedance. However, the current limiter is disclosed as protecting inputs of probes and measuring equipment and the signal path has a minimum resistance of 1.0kOhms. Therefore, it is the opinion of the Examiner that there is a minimum low voltage for which the device needs for operating and it would have been obvious to provide a minimum voltage threshold (less than 1.0 V for Claims 3, 11 & 15) for low impedance operation wherein

Art Unit: 2836

it was ensured that the signal path was fully conducting, thereby helping to ensure that minimum losses due to the conducting current limiter do not unnecessarily affect the probe or input readings of any attached testing and measuring equipment, thereby increasing the product's performance and reliability. As far as the second threshold being greater than 10 Volts (for Claims 4, 12 & 16), Lei discloses 23.0 volts for transition into a high impedance mode.


The Prior Art made of record and not relied upon (see PTO-892) is considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ronald W. Leja whose telephone number is (571)272-2053. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Sircus can be reached on (571)272-2800. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 2836

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Ronald W Leja
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2836

3/21/05

rwl
March 21, 2005